

New committee assignment will give Congressman Barrow a direct hand in crafting a wide range of legislation affecting health care, energy policy, and trade

Washington, DC - 12th District Georgia Congressman John Barrow (D-Savannah) has accepted an offer to join the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, the oldest legislative standing committee in the House of Representatives. With one of the broadest jurisdictions of any Congressional committee in the House of Representatives, the Energy and Commerce Committee deals directly with a wide array of legislation and oversight affecting issues such as national energy policy, interstate and foreign trade, telecommunications, biomedical research and development, consumer protection, and public health.

“The chance to serve on the Energy and Commerce Committee gives me an extraordinary opportunity to make sure that the people of Georgia's 12th District have a say in a wide range of legislation involving some of the most important issues facing our country,” Barrow said.

In the new Congress, one major priority for the Energy and Commerce Committee will be the reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), which helps fund Georgia's PeachCare program for children of low-income working families. Unless Congress acts soon, PeachCare will face a projected \$130 million funding shortfall.

"When it comes to our children's health, Congress needs to get in gear," Barrow said. "That starts by fixing the Children's Health Insurance Program so that states like Georgia can fully fund and expand important initiatives like PeachCare. We can't afford to let this issue slide to the back burner."

In addition, the Energy and Commerce committee will also help take the lead in crafting legislation to enhance America's domestic development and distribution of alternative energy sources such as bio-diesel, coal-to-fuel, and ethanol. During this year's reauthorization of the federal Farm Bill, alternative energy sources derived from agriculture will be a major focus of debate.

"Responsibly developing America's home grown energy sources is vital to the nation's economy and preserving our way of life," Barrow said. "Every year, farmers all across Georgia are growing and harvesting a potential source of renewable energy that could very well be the key to our nation's energy independence.

I intend to use my seat on this committee to help make sure our farmers are treated fairly, so they can take the lead in making America energy independent."

Barrow will be the only member in the majority from Georgia to serve on the Energy and Commerce Committee. Subcommittee assignments are expected to be announced later this month.

To learn more about the Energy and Commerce Committee, visit: http://www.house.gov/committee_democrats/.

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